

# AVALANCHE ADVISORY

**U.S. FOREST SERVICE**

**FORECASTER: Davis**

**IDAHO PANHANDLE AVALANCHE CENTER**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 02/25/2011**

**DATE ISSUED: 02/25/2011 0730**

**OUTLOOK: 02/26-27/2011**

This report does not apply to local ski areas within the forecast region and the hazard rating will remain valid through midnight February 25, 2011. Special thanks to Idaho Parks and recreation for sponsoring this Avalanche advisory.

Thanks also to Jake from the Selkirk Powder Co. for the pit data from the Schweitzer backcountry and the boys up at the Caribou Mountain Lodge for braving the cold with me. This weather is tame for a hardy bunch of Minnesotn's.



## WEATHER

**TODAY:** Sunny to the north and becoming sunny to the south. Temperatures hovering around 0 and light easterly winds.



**TONIGHT:** Mostly clear and calm, temperatures 2-11 below 0. Watch surface hoar formation.

**SATURDAY:** Pacific weather begins to push in with a fair chance of light snow accumulations, warming temperatures in the low teens, and moderate WSW winds. Increasing chance of a few inches of snow by Saturday evening, temperatures in the single digits, and light- moderate SSW winds. By Sunday a 100% chance of 3-5 inches of new snow across our forecast region exits with temperatures in the low 20s and increasing SSW winds with gusts to 20mph. **The avalanche danger will increase on Sunday with the expected weather.** Buried surface hoar, warming temperatures and more snow is our next concern.

**Selkirks and Cabinet mountains:** In the Selkirks yesterday we found good sliding conditions on sheltered aspects in about 1 foot of light snow. This snow was sitting on a crust formed last weekend and shears were easy on the crust. This layering will be most sensitive where wind-scoured or windloaded on exposed slopes. The upper 4 feet of the pack was highly faceted with numerous decomposing crusts. Wind was strong mid-week out of the ENE and wind-loaded aspects are highly variable. Stick to lower angled, <35 degrees, sheltered aspects for the best powder. Avalanche danger is rated **CONSIDERABLE** on windloaded aspects steeper than 35 degrees above 5,000 feet. The avalanche danger is MODERATE on non wind-loaded slopes less than 35 degrees.

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|--|---|--|---|--|
|  |  | Dangerous avalanche conditions. Careful snowpack evaluation, cautious route-finding and conservative | Natural avalanches possible; human-triggered avalanches likely. | Small avalanches in many areas; or large avalanches in specific areas; or very large avalanches in isolated areas. |
|  |   |  |   |  |

**St. Regis Basin and Silver valley:** At Lookout Pass Dan found 190cm of snow with easy shears in the upper 3 feet of the pack. He found clean, easy shears about 3 inches deep in the new snow and more notably, clean easy shears about 2 feet deep. This snow was very low density and not adding a lot of stress but he did note wind effect at higher elevations and winds mid-week were gusty and blowing from ESE. Thanks to Peter who found easy shears near the surface and then about 20 inches deep on multiple aspects in the Silver Mt. Backcountry. . Avalanche danger is rated **CONSIDERABLE** on windloaded aspects steeper than 35 degrees above 5,000 feet. The avalanche danger is MODERATE on non wind-loaded slopes less than 35 degrees.

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In your travels today watch steep wind-loaded and wind-hardened snow. You'll notice easy shears in the upper 2 feet, especially above that crust from last weekend. Low density, fluffy snow has not overly stressed weak layers where it is not wind-effected. Our main concern is warming temperatures, more snow, and buried surface hoar which could lead to widespread instability beginning Sunday.

The next avalanche advisory will be issued March 4<sup>th</sup>.

Contact: Kevin Davis (208) 265-6686, Ed Odegaard (208) 245-6209, or John Olson (208) 265-6635

This message is available by calling (208) 765-7323 or toll-free at 1-866-489-8664.

E-mail address: [kevingdavis@fs.fed.us](mailto:kevingdavis@fs.fed.us), [odegaard@fs.fed.us](mailto:odegaard@fs.fed.us), [jrolson@fs.fed.us](mailto:jrolson@fs.fed.us), [ebmorgan@fs.fed.us](mailto:ebmorgan@fs.fed.us)

Have a safe and pleasant weekend!!!!

